

# ARCHITECTURE

VOL. XXVI. OCTOBER 15, 1912. No. 4

ARCHITECTURE, conducted by a Board of Architects in the interests of the profession, is published the fifteenth of every month by FORBES & COMPANY, LTD., (A. H. Forbes, Pres.), 527 Fifth Avenue, New York. Its opinions on technical subjects are either prepared or revised by specialists.

PRICE, mailed flat to any address in the United States, Mexico or Cuba, \$5.00 per annum, in advance; to Canada, \$6.00 per annum; to any foreign address, \$7.00 per annum.

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ENTERED at the New York Post Office as second-class mail matter.

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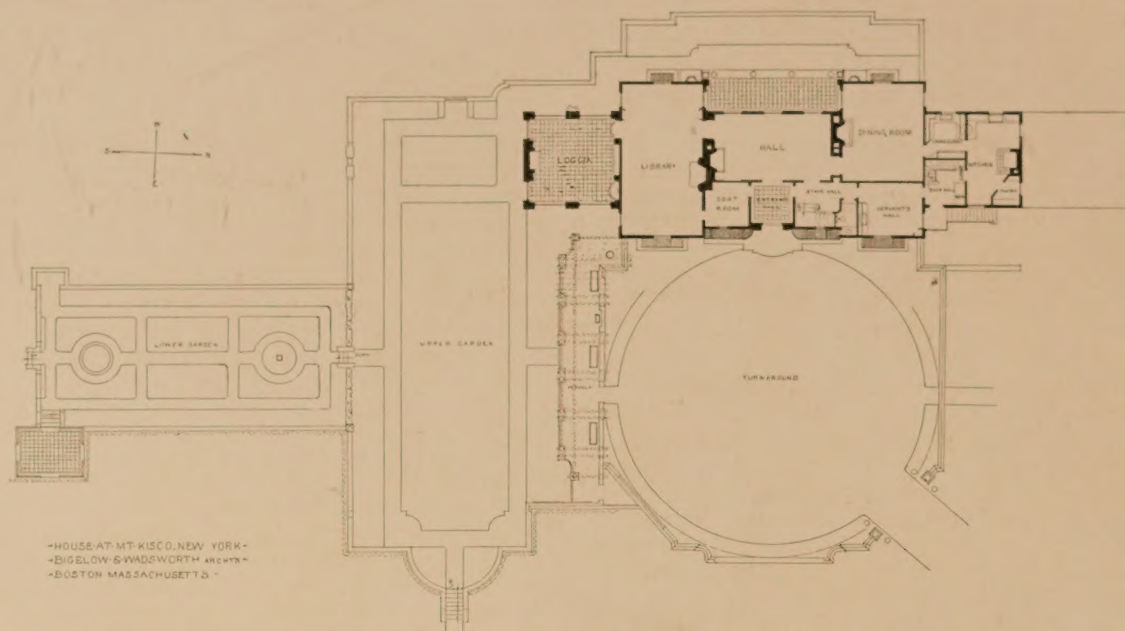
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GROUND PLAN, COUNTRY ESTATE, J. H. TOWNE, MT. KISCO, N. Y.

Bigelow &amp; Wadsworth, Architects.

## ARCHITECTURAL CRITICISM.

THE First Baptist Church, Pittsburg, Pa. (Plates XCV-XCIX) was first won in competition by the New York office of Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson, some three years ago, and has only just been completed. It is, of all the work of this firm which has so far been constructed, the most interesting, and the most beautiful, and its interest is due very greatly to the fact that it is to such a slight extent traditional and to such a great extent original. In a recent article in "The Architectural Record" on this church the writer speaks of its being an intelligent digest of English and Continental Gothic and while it is all this, it is a great deal more. It is genuine modern architecture, impossible of course without knowledge of traditional forms, but a building which could not conceivably have been designed by either French or English Gothic architects, or by a collaboration between them. Archaeological correctness is apparently the last thing that Mr. Goodhue thinks of, and while archaeology may be of assistance, especially when by the term we denote a very thorough acquaintance with the whole field of old work, certainly when archaeology becomes a study of one particular building or a small group of buildings of the same period, the results thus produced are cold, dry and uninteresting in the extreme.

One notes in the work of this firm that its development is like the development of Gothic architecture itself, constantly toward taller and more slender forms with ever increasing emphasis on the vertical lines, and a constant assertion of their dominance. This is not only true of the exterior of the church but of the interior, and even the stone and tile vault covering the nave rises to a point high in the roof, although the aisles, which are in the case of this building mere passage ways, are kept comparatively low. The most surprising thing about the buildings, however, is that one of this type, and of a plan not extraordinarily different from the usual Gothic one, could have been adapted to fit and so admirably fit, the curious and unusual conditions of the pro-

gram of the competition in which this building was won. Every architect who read this program will remember what was a stumbling block for all of them, the requirement that the Sunday School should be so arranged that it could be thrown into the body of the church and could have a nearly perfect view of the pulpit. Also the Sunday School itself was required to be capable of sub-division by sliding partitions, etc., so that it could be either closed into separate rooms or opened into one large one. This program seemed on the face of it like the usual requirements of the "plain business man" endeavoring to combine two mutually exclusive ideas into a single one, and to be absolutely destructive of any possibility of agreeable treatment of the interior, and to say the least very difficult to treat on the exterior. These mountains of difficulty seem in execution to have shrunk into mole hills at the touch of the magician's wand, and the arrangement Mr. Goodhue adopted for his plan is so simple and so perfectly evident as to have been passed over by most of us who, looking for difficulties, found them. Mr. Goodhue has treated the Sunday School wing as if it were the customary row of small buildings for residence purposes around a central court (in this case covered) which are usual in most old churches, with the result that when we look at it we feel that here is a good looking lot of little buildings attached to the side of the church which are perfectly at ease in its company; what was there to worry us about the exterior? And as for the plan, the transept has simply been lengthened and surrounded with rooms; what on earth bothered us there? All of which goes to prove that the self evident solution of a problem is very often the right one, and the easiest way in architecture is generally the best.

I do not believe that the readers of ARCHITECTURE need any one to point out the lovely features of either the exterior or the interior in this most extraordinary building. The fleche is of metal, that is evident, so is its quality of design, and also I am glad to find that a Gothic architect can get along without a spire, just as I am glad to see that a Classic architect can get along without an order.



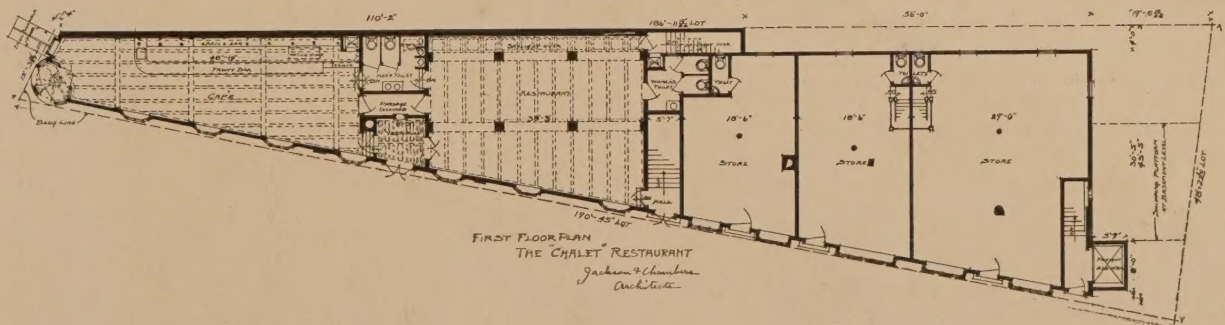
IT is a very surprising side light on American ideals to find that in so many cases it is the saloon keepers who have the best appreciation of art. One can be sure as one walks along Second or Third Avenues, that the best looking building in the block is a saloon, and walking through Fulton and Dey Streets just off Broadway the most artistic buildings that one sees are the cafe restaurants. Stepping up a little further in the scale one of the most beautiful mural decorations in New York is over the bar of the Knickerbocker Hotel, and the Tap Room of the Prince George is the loveliest piece of design of its kind in the city. I suppose that it should therefore not come as much of a surprise that quite the most amusing building visible in the Plaza at the Long Island City end of the Queensboro Bridge is a cafe restaurant called "The Chalet," Jackson & Chambers, architects, (Plate CII) of which photograph and plan are presented. It is unfortunate that the photographs do not show the color of the original, because like all picturesque work of this description, it depends very largely on color for its effect. The walls are a pleasant buff, and the woodwork brown, and the roof red; painted decorations between the oriel windows in the first story, assist in adding a brightness and agreeable quality to the structure. I suppose as a piece of design it is not of extraordinary merit, but I think that most architects would find it far harder to do this sort of a building than one which would be called more "architectural." I imagine that the real reason that the saloons are well designed as a whole, is because the saloon keepers realize that a clean, pleasant exterior is a good indication of a clean, pleasant interior, with goods of quality. Certain of our large shop keepers also appreciate this fact, and we have notable examples of this in the semi-monumental character of Tiffany's, the Gorham Building, Altman's and others of our business structures, but the average shop keeper in the small town has not yet reached this stage. The sooner he does realize it the better it will be for him, and the worse for his competitors, who have not yet waked up to the fact that the best advertisement a man can possibly have is an artistic enclosure for his goods. The value of this sort of advertising is constantly increasing.

THE Eltinge Theater is a sensibly designed structure of the usual theater type, executed in terra cotta with colored terra cotta decorations. It is evidently a theater and so fulfills its requirements; it is also gay and cheerful as befits a building intended for light entertainment. Architecturally it is not stupendous, resembling rather a successful esquisse than serious design. The attractive interior of the house was designed by Paul B. LaVelle. The style is derived from a short period in French history immediately following Napoleon's visit to Egypt. The Little Corporal

was deeply impressed with the strong character of Egyptian architecture and this interest was his incentive for the research into the origin and mysteries of Masonry. It resulted in finding the key for the deciphering of the hieroglyphics. The architectural style may be termed Egyptian-Empire. It represents the placing of ornament in powerful expression. The interior of the Eltinge Theater is the basis of an interesting study of an architectural period about which little is generally known. Mr. LaVelle is responsible for a new thought. It is unusually well planned according to the modern theater that the seats should all be as close to the stage as possible, though why there should be a modern theory and only lately observed no one seems to know. The very difficult problem of how to treat the ceiling of the theater has been unusually well taken care of.

IF McKim, Mead & White have one point on which they are stronger than any other it is probably gates. I have seen wooden gates, stone gates, brick gates, concrete gates and iron gates, designed by that firm, and I have never yet seen bad ones. They have done two at Princeton, one monumental pair at the entrance to the campus, and these, illustrated in this number, leading to the athletic field (Plate CI). As to criticising them, I don't see any flaws to pick; the ironwork is good, the brickwork very nicely handled, and the two tiger cats on the top are excellent pieces of decorative sculpture with the attitude of having just perceived a bad smell, so characteristic of sculpture of this kind: To sum up briefly they are real nice gates.

THE country house of Mr. John H. Towne, Mt. Kisco, N. Y., Bigelow & Wadsworth, architects (Pages 190-193) is of that very dignified, quiet and restrained variation of Italian architecture which has been more or less adopted as an American style, and which seems so perfectly satisfactory for American needs and landscapes. The building itself is delightfully designed and most agreeably detailed. The architects have been fortunate enough to have the opportunity to develop a rather large formal garden as a part of their scheme, and this garden has been very beautifully designed to form an easy transition stage between the house and the surrounding country. The fore-court, which has of late years become quite a feature of country house design, is both simply and prettily treated, and the pergola piazza is exceedingly nicely done, both as a piece of individual design and in its connection with the house. The whole building although very simple has an air of capable design and quiet and restrained handling which is an essential to success in country work.







I. PROMENADE AND VISTA FORMING THE CENTRAL FEATURE.

## VI. THE DESIGN AND THE DETAILS OF THE DESIGN.

CHARLES W. LEAVITT, JR., LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT.

**I**F the conditions of a property have been mastered and the objects to be accomplished are held well in mind, one is ready to make the design.

The first sketch should be on a small scale so that the whole problem may be grasped at a glance, and your ideas not confused by details. The details should be largely disregarded until the general plan has been conceived and plotted in some definite form.

In making up the general plan one should have in mind the distances and scope which the ordinary human vision can take in when viewing nature; in other words, what you can see from any given point. This at once limits the area to be considered as a concrete plan in itself. For instance you plan a house and you work out each room or suite of rooms on each floor where the rooms open into each other so that they balance and hang together to make a complete picture; but you do not necessarily have to have the next wing or next floor worked out to balance with the first, if they cannot both be seen at the same time.

The façade of a house must have a balance and completeness in itself; but the opposite side of the house or some other angle that cannot be observed at the same time as the first, is not dependent upon the first.

Just so in landscape work, you must have a comprehensive plan for the portions which are seen together but when you take up the other or outlying districts which are independent to a certain extent of the first section, you may change into another form of development. This gives greater latitude and makes it possible to adhere more closely to an irregular topography and give a more interesting and diversified plan. For example: The treatment about a building should be formal to some extent to be in harmony with the artificiality of the building. As you get away from the house the formal terrace may change into gardens which again give place, as you proceed, to plantations and finally you leave the formality entirely, to look into and through the natural woods and glens or over cultivated fields or orchards.

The arrangements of these various developments and the points to change from one to the other and the way of making the junctions and changes requires much skill and has much to do with the ultimate success of the whole. It is unfortunate when one picture overlaps the next without a carefully blended frame work for each. Your impressions should be

clear and distinct of each effect produced rather than a confused though perhaps beautiful ensemble. These effects must first be worked out upon the general plan at a small scale and then enlarged to a scale convenient for working out the details of individual designs for each feature or effect.

I do not feel that one can effect either the formal or the informal or naturalistic school to the exclusion of another any more than one would wish to live always in the city or the country. To be sure some people who have been born and bred in the city never go to the country and do not understand it. These people are apt to be narrow and ill informed and not practical, for city life is of necessity a narrow existence. The country life as a whole is much broader and more free, for even if one lives in the country and never goes to the city he has a broader vision, becomes familiar with the basis of the world's wealth, has just as much if not more time to read than the city man and altogether is more apt to be better fitted to take his place as a good citizen and make a record in an emergency, than his brother in the city.

This simile is a fairly good one when comparing the formal and informal schools; they both have their place and a proper combination, with each performing its respective function is the logical way of using them.

It is, however, to be remembered that the informal or natural is the great basis upon which is superimposed the formal work; and that the formal work is largely to bring out by way of contrast the beauties of the informal and is therefore the least important of the two; but nevertheless most necessary.

It is the creation of man in competition with nature; an egotistical man is liable to go too far; a wise man refrains from competition and uses his work for a foil or setting for the beauties of nature. One difficulty which comes to the student, especially the architect, is the fact that when he starts to plan out the development of a piece of land, which he may not understand, and of which he may not know the possibilities or the elements which go to make up the subject he wishes to treat, he is at a loss to know where and how to begin and where to end.

Nature dominates the world; man must design his work to fit in with nature, not try to fit nature to his needs. It cannot be said that we are not to have our way and fit nature to do what we want, for there are many instances of just this being done. We can say that very few of such undertakings are beautiful, and most of them are very expensive.



II. WALK THROUGH A PERGOLA FORMING APPROACH TO THE HOUSE.





III. A PORTION OF A FORMAL GARDEN GIVING A SECLUDED EFFECT.

If we cannot take nature's design, (meaning by this when confronted with the problem) reason out nature's plan for this place, work into the environment of the scheme and then endeavor to extend this scheme to meet our ideas, whatever we do will be artificial so it is best to frankly acknowledge it and make it formal, but have it an extension or addition to nature's work rather than something quite foreign to the whole arrangement.

Nature works on formal lines at times; for instance, look at the ocean's beaches, the great meadows, the Hudson River, the Grand Canyon; are these not on formal lines and do they not suggest our most formal designs? In other words, we can find plenty of excuses for introducing into our designs sufficient formality to give strength and character to the design and form a contrast to nature without doing away with the naturalistic feeling which should pervade the works of the landscape architect.

There are places which of necessity are absolutely formal and where the introduction of nature excepting under clipped and artificial guise is impossible. Here is the chance for the talent of the designer.

On the other hand, we have problems which do not permit of anything but the preservation of natural phenomena; any changes or artificial additions would become jarring notes and spoil the composition.

The determination of what to do in order to preserve or enhance the natural beauties of nature is the first consideration in the design. As soon as we have made up our mind what we want to do we superimpose upon the topography our ideas.

Great effort should be made to change the contours of the land as little as possible. This in itself may give us a basis for the design. Every plan should have an axis about which the design is built up and balanced. The cross and supplementary axis may be worked up independently if they can be made into independent pictures, though the roads, paths, waterways, etc., should carry through in graceful flowing lines that will make one harmonious development.

A few general principles may be noted: In grading we should have the vertical sections concave rather than convex and never have an artificial grade in connection with the natural slope of the ground without in some way blending the two and taking off the harshness of the contact.

In locating a house, effort should be made to place it on a terrace or level plateau so that it may have a horizontal base upon which to rest. Make the drives and paths as incon-

spicuous as possible, sinking them slightly below the general surface if necessary.

Straight roads should not be built on hilly ground or curved roads on level land unless there is something to warrant such change in direction.

The buildings and gardens should be oriented to secure as much east and south sun as possible, and expose the living quarters to the prevailing breeze in the summer and protect them from the cold winds of winter.

A good arrangement for the kitchen and domestic quarters is to place them so they will have some air and will be in such a position that the odors from the kitchen will be carried away from the house.

The approach either by drive or walk to the house should be as far away as possible from the living porch, terrace and gardens of the house so that these living quarters will be as secluded and protected as may be possible.

The windows from the house should look out into vistas and there should be a feature or picture to be seen from each window; in other words, the compositions of the pictures should be arranged so as to be visible from the windows as well as from other points. If possible, arrange to have a little waterscape from the terrace or windows of the house and plan the gardens so that they will not be directly in the view but to one side and enclosed, surrounded and backed up by foliage or a hillside.

The gardens should not be bold and unsurrounded but secluded and out of the general picture.

In arranging domestic buildings, care should be taken not to have the approaches of too formidable a type. Whereas, on the other hand in public buildings, the approaches should be more dignified and formal and in keeping with the mass and character of the building which is being treated. The approach to the building is one of the most important features to be handled.

In grouping buildings, they should, if possible, be arranged so as to form as much protection for some centrally arranged quadrangle or area and each building should have a relationship to the entire group and not be independent and stand alone unless it is some isolation building or some building that you wish for some particular reason to separate.

In park schemes one should have a definite backbone to a plan and work up from some such permanent and effective thoroughfare features and interesting places where it may be possible to wander away from the throng which naturally uses the thoroughfare for a short cut or for general prom-

(Continued page 203)



IV. BUILDINGS OF HOSPITAL GROUP AROUND THE CENTRAL GARDEN.





ENTRANCE FRONT, "WINGFIELD," COUNTRY HOUSE, J. H. TOWNE, MT. KISCO, N. Y. (Plan, page 186).

Bigelow & Wadsworth, Architects.





GARDEN, "WINGFIELD," COUNTRY HOUSE, J. H. TOWNE, MT. KISCO, N. Y.

Bigelow & Wadsworth, Architects

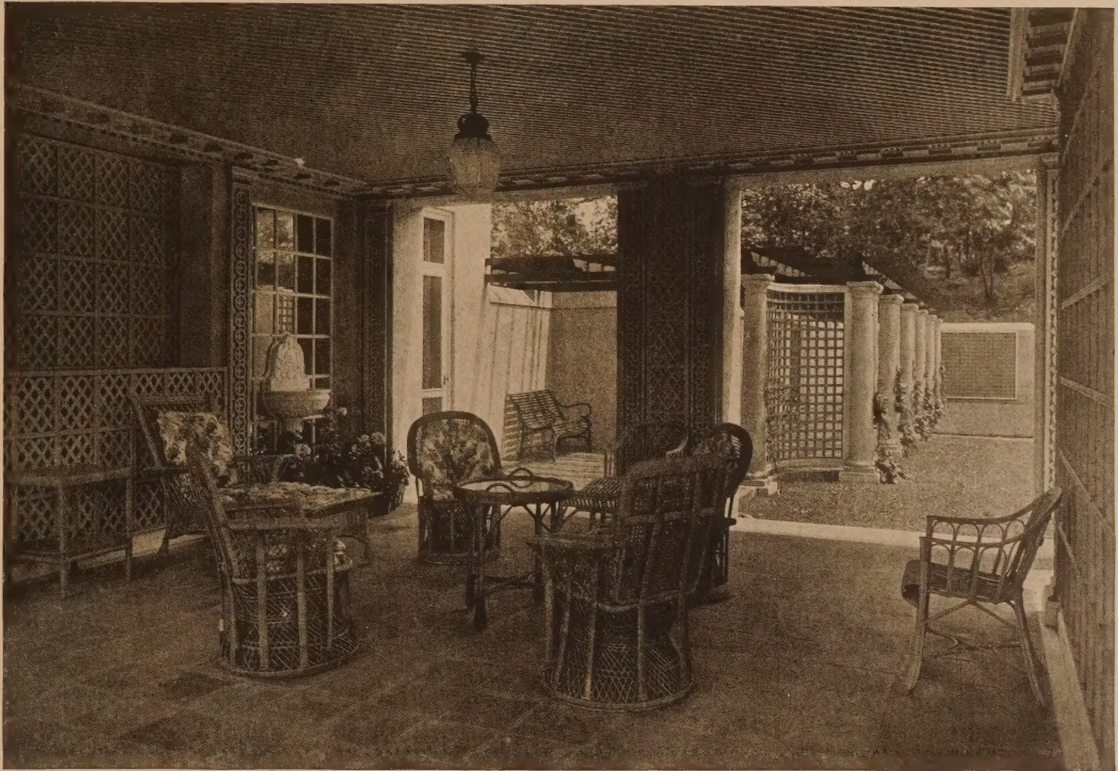




DETAIL, TERRACE FRONT, "WINGFIELD," COUNTRY HOUSE, J. H. TOWNE, MT. KISCO, N. Y.

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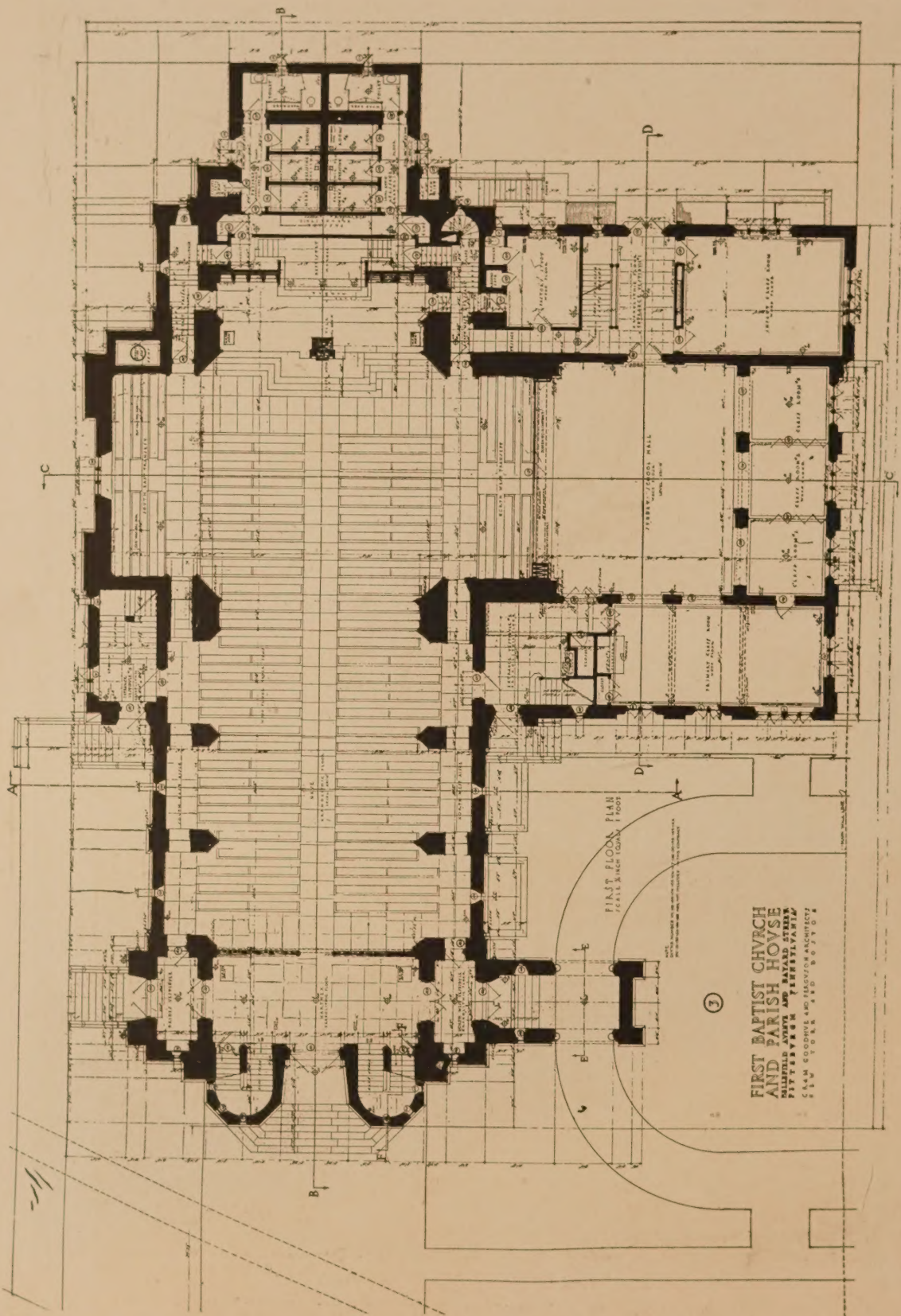




LOGGIA AND TEA HOUSE, "WINGFIELD," COUNTRY HOUSE, J. H. TOWNE, MT. KISCO, N. Y.

Bigelow & Wadsworth, Architects.

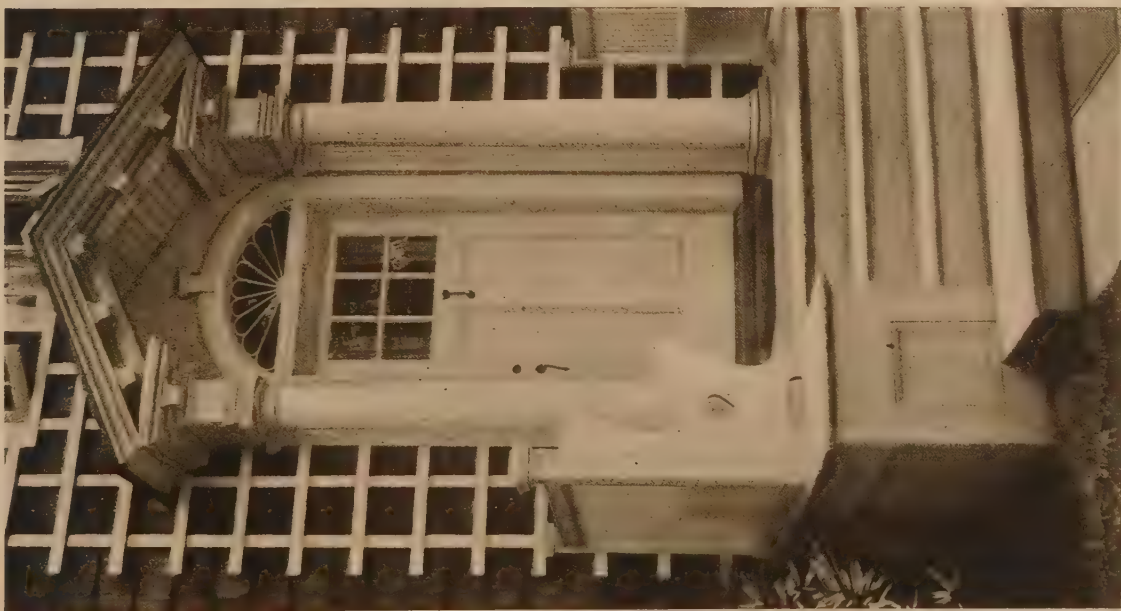
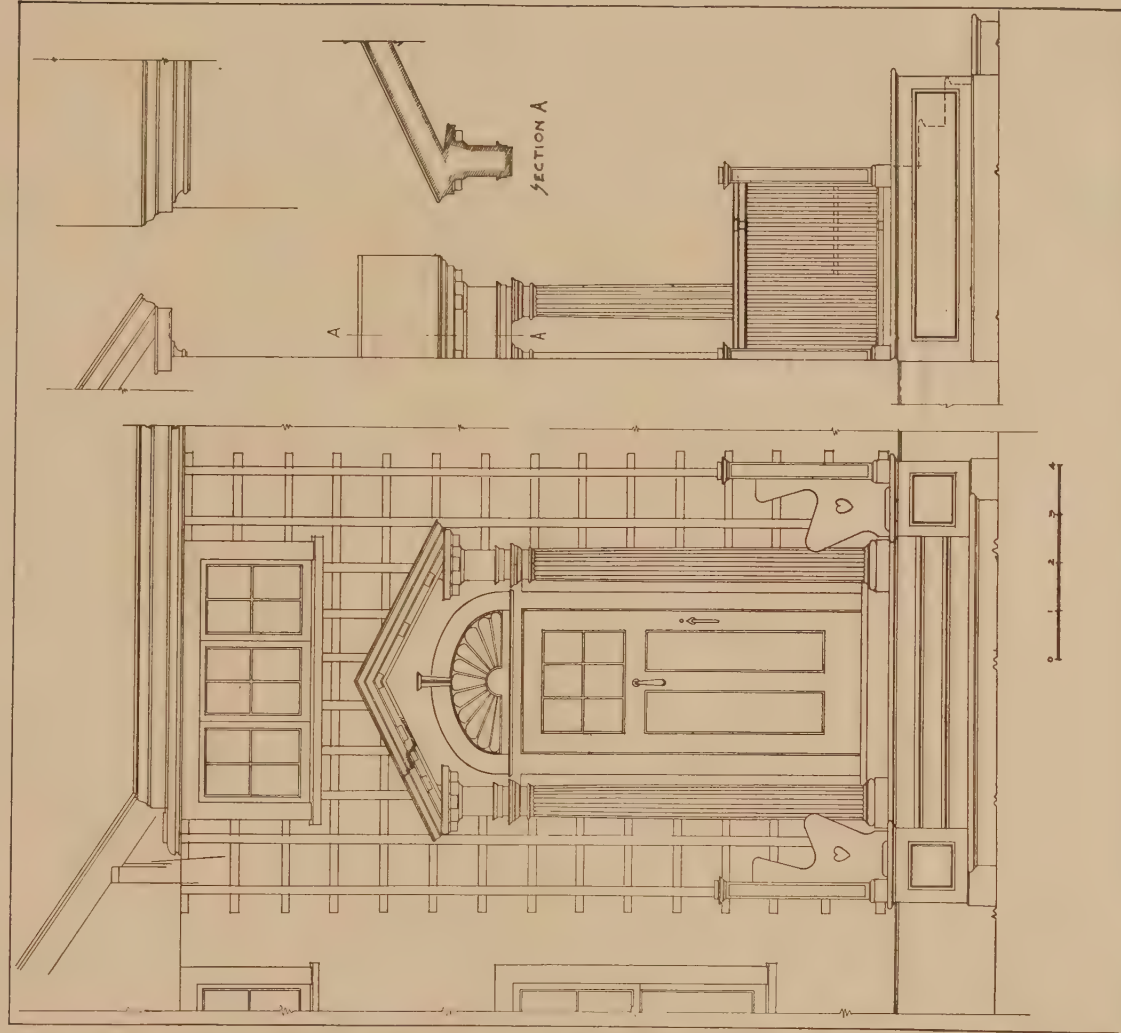




Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson, Architects.

PLAN, FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, PITTSBURGH, PA.





ENTRANCE AND DETAIL, HOUSE, L. ASHEIM, BRIDGEPORT, CONN.

L. Asheim, Architect.

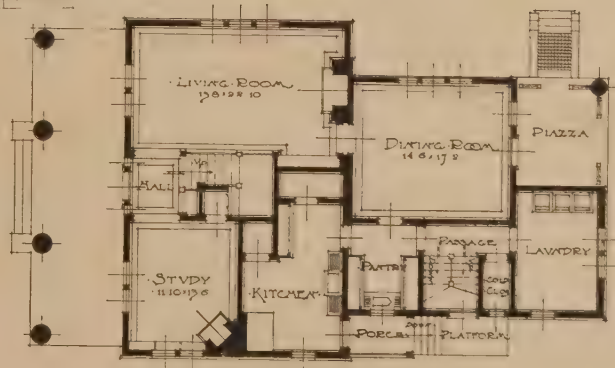
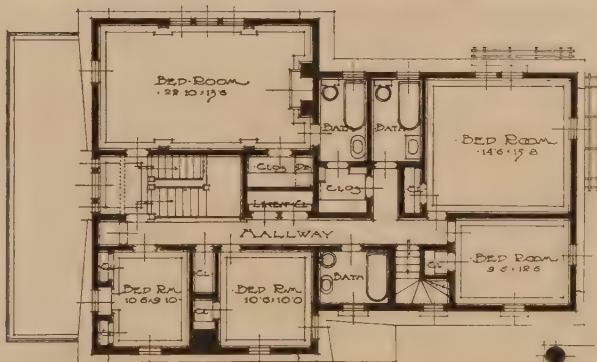




HOUSE, MRS. AYMAR EMBURY II, ENGLEWOOD, N. I.

Aymar Embury II, Architect





HOUSE AND PLANS, MRS. AYMAR EMBURY II, ENGLEWOOD, N. J.

Aymar Embury II, Architect.

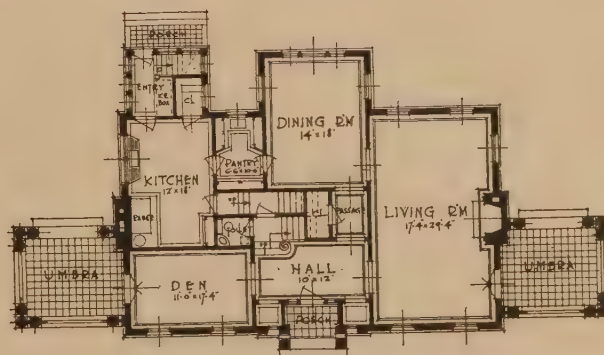
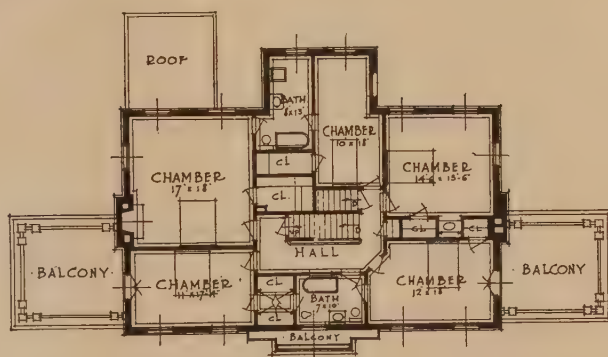




HOUSE, H. WARD LEONARD, BRONXVILLE, N. Y.

Bates &amp; How, Architects





HOUSE AND PLANS, H. WARD LEONARD, BRONXVILLE, N. Y.

Bates & How, Architects.

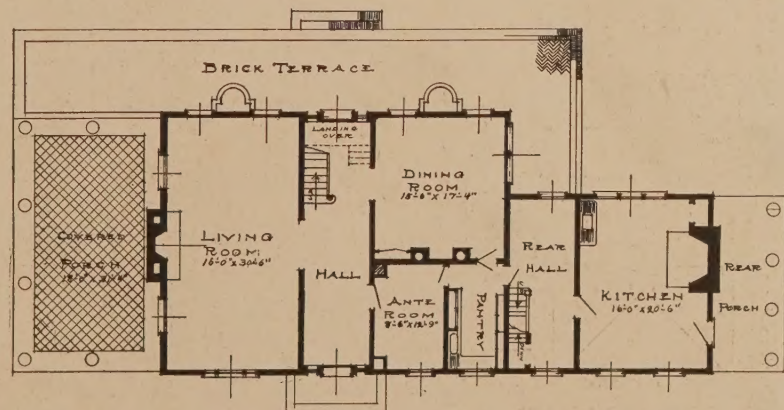
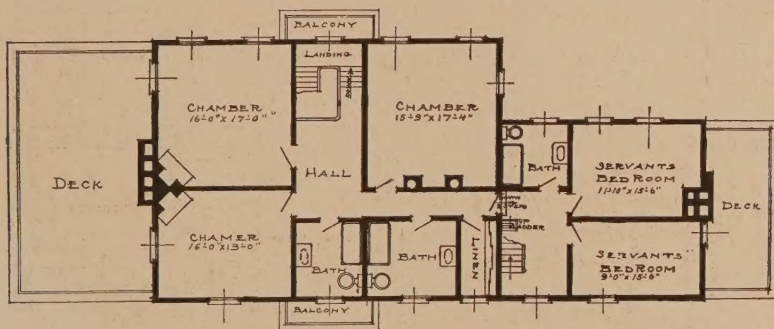
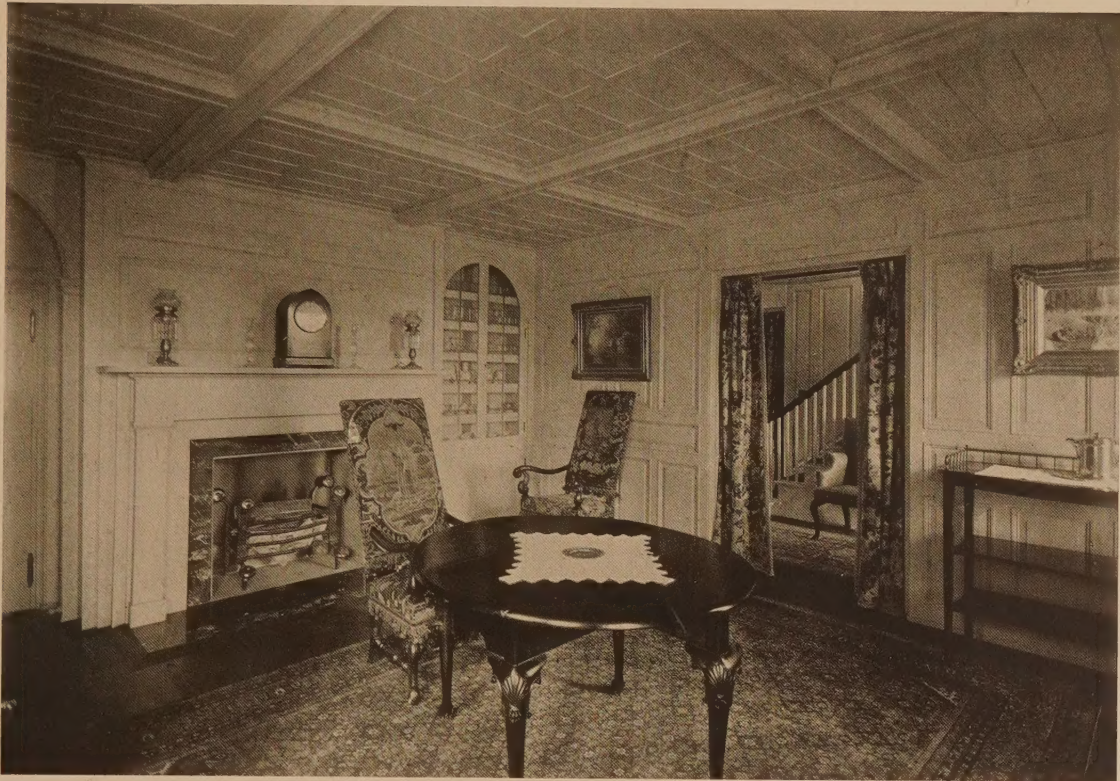




EXTERIOR AND HALL, HOUSE, A. S. COCHRAN, EAST VIEW, N. Y.

R. W. Gardner, Architect.

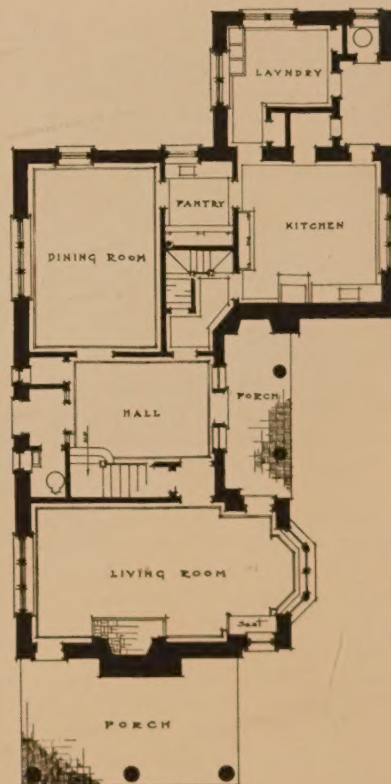
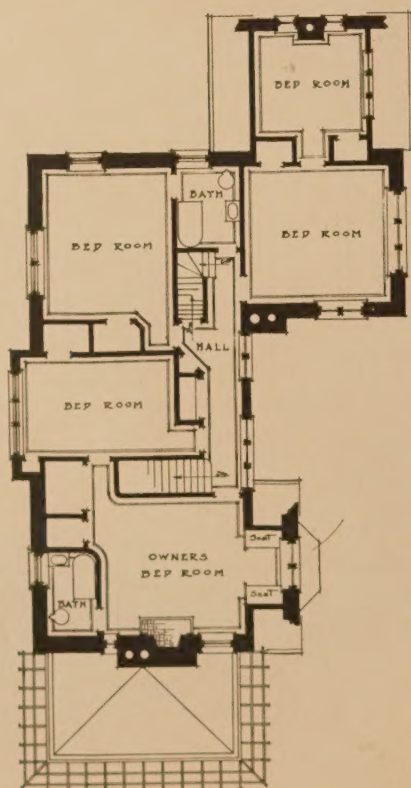




DINING ROOM AND PLANS, HOUSE. A. S. COCHRAN, EAST VIEW, N. Y.

R. W. Gardner, Architect.







(Continued from page 189)

enade. Such a promenade or midway gives character to the design and the definiteness to the plan which enables people to find their way about and not become lost or bewildered unless they are desirous of a ramble when they secure it by wandering into the side lanes or labyrinths of the park.

In any changes and additions to existing plans, great respect should be given to the original design and no changes should be made unless they are a distinct betterment. If any practical considerations enter the problem which necessitate alterations, great care should be given to do as little harm as possible to existing conditions which though they may not be beautiful may have a sentiment attached to them and it would therefore be wrong to disturb them without very good reasons. This holds very true in the improvement and rearrangement of towns or villages as it would be very easy to change the entire character of the place by a few radical so-called improvements and possibly destroy the most valuable asset of the town. Such improvements attract the visitors and tourists and make revenue for the municipality.

#### THE TARSNEY ACT.

PEOPLE who take an intelligent interest in our public architecture, and who are aware how greatly it has been improved since the passage of the Tarsney act, have found themselves forced to view with serious concern the repeal of that act proposed in the Sundry Civil bill as it has passed the House and gone to the Senate. Persons in honest doubt upon the subject may be recommended to read the full report of the testimony given last year by Mr. James Knox Taylor, then Supervising Architect of the Treasury, before the House Committee on Expenditures of the Treasury Department, upon whose report the proposal to repeal the act was founded. It is understood, of course, that the majority of the committee regarded themselves as retained to show that extravagance and waste had marked the Republican administration of the department. Still, there are limits to the extent to which a partisan, if he have sense and public spirit, will go in his endeavors to discredit the other party.

These limits the majority of the committee altogether disregarded. Having elicited from Mr. Taylor the admission that the employment of eminent architects in private practice might cost the Government from one and a half to two and a half per cent, they thought their task brought to a triumphant conclusion. They entirely disregarded Mr. Taylor's further explanation, which would have been superfluous to anybody who knew anything about the matter, that the Government had received far more than value for this expenditure, and they brought in their proposal to repeal the beneficent act in question. The leading minds of the committee ignored not only the intelligent and temperate explanations of the witness but the modest and sensible suggestions of a minority of their own body. To describe these leading minds, the minds of Cox of Indiana and Goeke of North Dakota, as "half baked," were grossly to flatter their complete and complacent crudity. It is conceivable that the conviction of the hopelessness of contending with such intellects, at Washington or at Ephesus, on a question of aesthetic appreciation, may have determined the regretted resignation of Mr. Taylor from an office in which he was compelled to encounter them.

Among other things the committee was much concerned

with the extravagance of the Treasury Department in paying fees to unofficial architects for three buildings of moderate size and cost, although Mr. Taylor had testified that competitions among outside architects were held only when the cost of the proposed building ran into millions. It seems, however, that Secretary MacVeagh has had the sensible notion of selecting a typical design for Government buildings in cities of equal population and requirements of Government service, in fact of standardizing to a certain extent the designs of such buildings, and that he desired to secure the best possible solution of the respective problems. The standardization of designs for Government buildings was carried out to the fullest extent under the military administration of the public buildings during the ten years preceding the Civil War, with results that would be extremely monotonous if all the buildings of a certain class were seen together. In fact, however, the Government buildings erected under this system were and are much more agreeable and dignified objects than the average of the buildings erected between 1861, when the control of public buildings was transferred from the War Department to the Treasury, and 1897, when the Tarsney act went into effect.

The leading minds of the committee endeavored to make out that the architects had procured the passage of the Tarsney act in order to get themselves jobs. Everybody who knows anything about the matter knows that, in conjunction with the body of cultivated citizens, the architects procured the enactment because the Government architecture was deplorably inferior to the best of our private building. Every such person also knows that the act has fulfilled its purpose and that the standard of Government building is now equal to that of private building. As for the architects, they have done their full share in making the act successful, and have made sacrifices to that effect. They have not only taken part in competitions without other compensation than the chance of getting the commission, which most reputable architects decline to do in competitions privately instituted, but they work for less than their regular commissions by assuming in the case of the Government certain expenses which in private practice they charge to their clients.

It is not to be supposed that because the leading minds of the House committee do not know or care for the difference between good and bad public architecture the same ignorance and apathy prevail in the Senate. On any aesthetic question the opinion of the Senate is apt to be preferable to that of the House. We might perhaps add that the opinion of a Republican House on such a question is preferable to that of a Democratic, if the colossal and Boeotian image of Uncle Joe did not confront us to put to shame such a contention. However that may be, it is not to be supposed that the silly and vandalistic scheme of the House committee of repealing a piece of legislation which has worked so well as the Tarsney act, though adopted by the House itself, will pass the Senate or survive a committee of conference.

#### NEW YORK CHAPTER A. I. A.

THE New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects awards each year two medals and four honorable mentions for excellence in exterior designs for apartment houses. These awards of medals and honorable mentions are made to owners. It is customary for them to award one medal to the class of apartment houses more than six stories in height and one medal to the class of apartment



houses six stories or less in height, giving two honorable mentions to each of the above two classes.

Owners of apartment houses desiring to enter their buildings for these awards may do so by sending to the secretary of the New York Chapter at any time previous to October 1st photographs of completed buildings, and the judgments for the awards will be made during the month of October and medals and certificates of honorable mentions presented in January of the following year.

Points for consideration in making the award are simplicity, good proportion, artistic and practical use of inexpensive materials, the avoidance of imitation or sham materials, adaptability of design to site and the satisfactory solution of necessary utilitarian features, such as fire escapes, tanks, bulkheads and awnings, thus making a competition that interests all and tends to produce results both practical and artistic.

Any apartment house which has been erected within the boroughs of Manhattan and the Bronx and shall have been completed within three years previous to October 1st is eligible for judgment, provided it has not received a medal or honorable mention in the previous year.

The jury making the awards consists of nine members: C. Grant La Farge, President of the New York Chapter; Robert W. De Forest, President of the Art Commission; John J. Murphy, Tenement House Commissioner; five members of the New York Chapter, and Egerton Swartwout, Secretary of the New York Chapter.

#### THE NEW YORK SKYSCRAPER.

**H**ERMAN Struck, the eminent German painter and Munich academician, who has recently been visiting America, contributes some diverting impressions on artistic New York in the Berliner Tagblatt.

He decidedly disagrees with the stock European view that the skyscrapers on Manhattan Island are an architectural excrescence, and extols them as aesthetically satisfying.

"As I steamed up the Bay," he writes, "I caught my maiden glimpse of New York's cloud-catching sky line, unfolding itself ever larger and larger, a fairylike silhouette was revealed to my wondering gaze. My emotions as I contemplated these gigantic symbols of our scientific utilitarian century were the same as those which moved me when I looked for the first time on the pyramids of ancient Egypt.

"The more I saw of the skyscrapers, which are the most characteristically American things to be seen in all the United States, the more they fascinated my artistic eye."

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Thos. Lamb, Architect.

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